

# **AN INITIAL HISTORICAL STUDY OF A PIECE OF LAND KNOWN AS PORTION 2 OF FARM NO. 287, BREDASDORP**

Prepared for

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Prepared by

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## 1. INTRODUCTION

A request has been submitted to the National Monuments Council (NMC) to allow development of some of the buildings on portion 2 of farm no. 287 in the division of Bredasdorp (known as the Sout Pan) [Figure 1]. As a result of concerns voiced by the NMC the Archaeology Contracts Office (ACO) has been asked to prepare a short background history of the property to ascertain the approximate age of the structures in question, and to collect any details in respect of the date of inception of the salt works and the operation thereof.

It was decided that no physical site inspection would take place before completion of the initial historical study and so no comment can be made about the buildings themselves, layout, or machinery.

While salt production in the Bredasdorp area has been taking place for many years, little by way of specific information has been recovered from formal archival sources.

## 2. BACKGROUND HISTORY OF PORTION 2 OF FARM 287

To understand the piece of land referred to above it is necessary to go back some years to when the original piece of land of which portion 2 was part, became private property.

The first reference to the property in the deeds office dates to 1869 when land including the salt pan (lots 1127 and 1128) was acquired by Henry Daniel Shea for the sum of £2457 18s 6d.<sup>1</sup> The property, formerly belonging to the state, measured 2547m 166sr. On Henry Sheas' death in 1878, he bequeathed varying shares of the property, now referred to as Springfield in the title deeds, to his wife (4/7 share) and 3 sons (1/7 share each)<sup>2</sup> The full transfer history is presented in Appendix A.

There are no specifics as to whether they split the property up, but attached to one of the deeds (T3643) is a small document referring to a lease with a certain Wadner & Eriksen dated 18.01.1899. No more information regarding the purpose of this lease could be found but it is tempting to suggest that this may have to do with salt production. We know from an extract from a travel journal that as early as 1838, farmers were already collecting salt from the natural pans in the area:

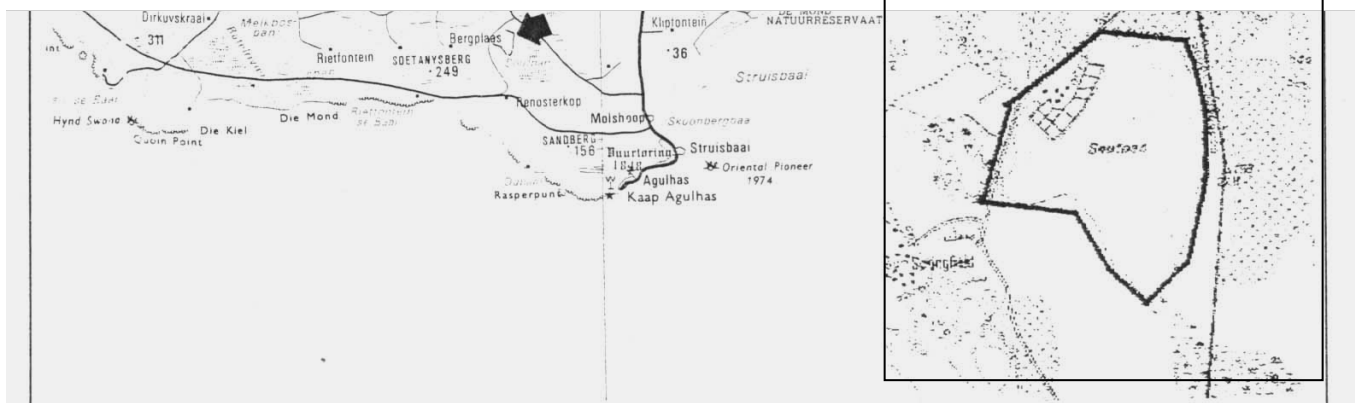
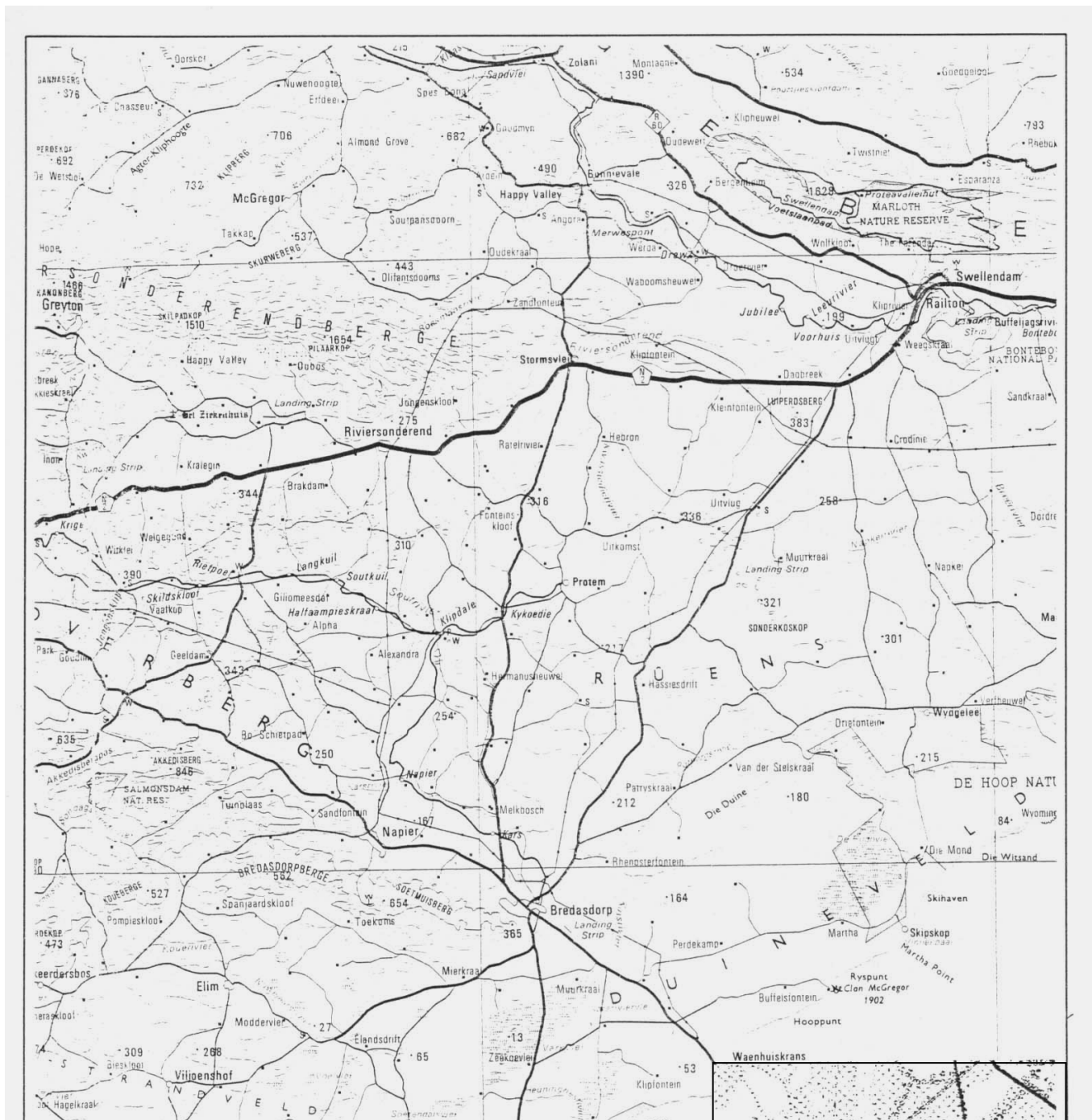
*December 17th, 1838. From Elim onwards the country becomes flatter and flatter and from the freshwater lake, Zoetendal lake, a big plain stretches landwards from the Nieuwe Jaars river to Struis Bay. Along the beach one finds the very youngest marine limestone and a certain shell-conglomerate. Where ever they occur there are freshwater lakes and also the well-known saltpans. The latter originate from the ocean and near them grow plants which love salty soil, such as statice, also St. Kraussiana Buching (Limonium Kraussianum), Samolus campanuloides R Br porosus Thunb and others.*

*These saltpans cry out during a hot summer. After heavy rains they fill up again and when the water evaporates they yield in good years quiet a lot of good crystalline salt, which the*

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<sup>1</sup> DO Bredasdorp quitrents 1/8, 15.01.1869

<sup>2</sup> DO T3642-3645, 3.07.1895



1

Location

Scale: 1:50 000



*farmers collect for sale. Even if they collect all the salt during one summer as much forms again after a rainy season and it has been so for many a year.*<sup>3</sup>

By 1903 it appears that the widow Shea had remarried and went by the surname Todd. In that year she purchased her sons' shares of the property although the transaction was only ratified in 1906.<sup>4</sup> She sold the farm to Elizabeth Blackburn in 1906 for the sum of £2200.<sup>5</sup>

The first official reference to salt production dates to 1914, when the farm was acquired by The Springfield Salt Pan and Farming Company Limited<sup>6</sup>. The purchase price of £3000 does not represent a very great increase in value over the intervening 8 years and would seem to imply that there was no commercial exploitation of salt taking place on a scale that had necessitated investment in substantial infrastructure. Amongst the details provided in the memorandum of association of the Springfield Salt Pan and Farming Co. Ltd., it is stated that the necessary buildings for the purpose of the company's business would be erected<sup>7</sup>, further suggesting that such did not exist at the time. The memorandum and articles of association, and the list of registered directors of the company are presented in Appendix B.

In 1920, Traub and Beinart in their capacity as directors of the salt company sold off a large section of the original property to H. Hurwitz and Company<sup>8</sup>, but retained 452m 114sr, which probably included the salt pan and some form of salt processing infrastructure. In 1950 this small piece of land was sold off for £3000 by the sole director of the salt company, Maurice Traub, presumably Abraham Traub's son.<sup>9</sup>

The purchaser of the land, James St. Vincent Broke, Lord De Saumarez, retained the land until his death in 1971 whereupon it was bequeathed to his 2 daughters and son-in-law. The land now measuring 387,3152Ha and referred to as Springfield Estates (Pty) Ltd., was shared equally amongst them<sup>10</sup> on condition that his wife could continue to live at the dwelling known as Springfield.<sup>11</sup> In 1974 a section of the land measuring 183,8008Ha and referred to as portion 2 of farm no. 287. was sold to a Mr. Hendrik Vermeulen<sup>12</sup> but they retained a large portion of land referred to as the remainder of farm 287. the piece which includes the house. In 1978 this portion was sold to Springfield Estate (Pty) Ltd.<sup>13</sup>

Vermeulen was the owner of the Springfield Salt Company based at Hermanus.<sup>14</sup> We must assume that Lord De Saumarez's children were not interested in the salt business and had sold that portion of the estate which was necessary to carry on salt production.

In 1987 Vermeulen sold to John Elton Morren and Marjorie Grace May Morren<sup>15</sup> who four years later sold to Soutpan Beleggings CC<sup>16</sup> who still retain the land.

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<sup>3</sup> Kraus, F. 1840. Travel Journal - Cape to Zululand. p29

<sup>4</sup> DO T618, 26.01.1906

<sup>5</sup> DO T619, 26.01.1906

<sup>6</sup> DO T2930, 17.04.1914

<sup>7</sup> CA LC 306 (1346)

<sup>8</sup> DO T9406, 2.07.1920

<sup>9</sup> DO T5399, 21.04.1950

<sup>10</sup> DO T25272, 22.09.1971

<sup>11</sup> DO Last will and testament, annexed to T25272, 22.09.1971

<sup>12</sup> DO T1500, 23.01.1974

<sup>13</sup> DO T26967, 26.10.1978

<sup>14</sup> anon, 1986. Salt producers in the Republic of South Africa - Directory 4/86. Johannesburg: Dept. of Mineral and Energy Affairs - Minerals Bureau.

<sup>15</sup> DO T39729, 1987

<sup>16</sup> DO T52108, 1991

### 3. DISCUSSION AND CONCLUSIONS

The questions regarding when salt production first started on the pan is difficult to answer with any certainty. It seems likely that salt has been collected from this and the many other pans in the area ever since humans have been in the area. In pre-colonial times salt would have been collected from the edges of the pan where evaporation of the brine had left salt around the edges. This *ad hoc* form of collecting salt is likely to have taken place during the early colonial period as well and we know that such use is documented (see footnote 3). As the need for salt grew, this method would have become increasingly unable to cope with demand as improved transport routes meant that product could reach a wider market than before.

No evidence for large scale commercial salt production exists before 1914, when the land was acquired by The Springfield Salt Pan and Farming Company Limited. In their articles of association it is stated that they would erect necessary buildings and while we cannot discount the possibility that some modest buildings may have existed on portion 2, a map dating to c1900 does not show any.<sup>17</sup>

A number of formal archival sources have been examined for information about the site. Due to the paucity of documentary sources only a modicum of success has been achieved. Finding out more about the history would require a much wider search (e.g. engaging the public for information and photographs etc.), which in the light of the current findings and the potential costs, is perhaps not entirely warranted.

### 4. RECOMMENDATIONS

The buildings on the site do not appear to have tremendous historical significance other than that they are connected to local salt production. Given this finding it is our feeling that the steps suggested by the NMC in their letter to Mr. R.C. Jefferey (ref 9/2/013/0029 dated 15.04.1997), should be sufficient in terms of documenting the buildings. These can be carried out by the owner at minimal cost and may already have been done. These steps include:

- i. Prepare a plan showing the structures on the site and indicating original use.
- ii. Prepare rough floor plans of buildings to be demolished.
- iii. Photograph any buildings that will be demolished or altered from a number of angles.
- iv. Offer any old machinery to a museum i.e. Bredasdorp-Napier Co-Op.

Items produced in points i - iii should be compiled into a document and submitted to the NMC to be placed on file.

### 5. PROFESSIONAL TEAM

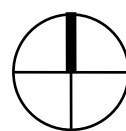
Report  
Archival research

Dave Halkett  
Dennis Neville

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<sup>17</sup> SAL KS.CP 1879/1880 - 1900. Sheet no. 3





## **Appendix A**

### **SPRINGFIELD AND SALT PAN Transfer history**



**This TD: Bredasdorp Quitrents 1/8 - 15.01.1869**

Prev. TD: None  
Next TD: T3642 - T3645, 3.07.1895  
Erf: 287 (Bredasdorp)  
Farm Name: Lots 1127 and 1128  
Extent: 2547m 166sr  
Diagram: 478/1867  
Price: 2457 pounds, 18 shillings, 6 pence  
From: Grant  
To: Henry Daniel Shea  
Neighbours: NW - Quitrent land attached to Vogel Valley  
NE & E - Zout Bosch  
W - Ruigtefontein  
SW - Zoet Augsberg  
S - Rhenoster Kop

Note: Attached to the diagram - "The above figure ABCDEFGA represents 2547m 166sr of government ground forming part of the government land at the Zoet Augsberg including the large Salt Pan - situated in the district of Bredasdorp, Field-cornetcy of Zoetendals Valley."

**This TD: T3642, 3.07.1895**

Prev. TD: Bredasdorp Quitrents 1/8 - 15.01.1869  
Next TD: T618, 26.01.1906  
Erf: 287 (Bredasdorp)  
Farm Name: Lots 1127 and 1128, known as the farm 'Springfield', including the salt pan.  
Extent: 4/7 th share [2547m 166sr]  
Diagram: none  
Price: Estate of the late Henry Daniel Shea  
From: Estate of the late Henry Daniel Shea  
To: Elizabeth Sarah Shea (spinster)

Note: "... Elizabeth Sarah Shea, spinster, John Martin Shea, Cecil Cowley Shea and Leonard Mellor Gordon Shea had agreed to take over the undermentioned property of a valuation of 1910 pounds sterling as part settlement of the estate of their father, the said Henry Daniel Shea ..."

**This TD: T3643, 3.07.1895**

Prev. TD: Bredasdorp Quitrents 1/8 - 15.01.1869  
Next TD: T618, 26.01.1906  
Erf: 287 (Bredasdorp)  
Farm Name: Lots 1127 and 1128, known as the farm 'Springfield', including the salt pan.  
Extent: 1/7 th share [2547m 166sr]  
Diagram: none  
Price: Estate of the late Henry Daniel Shea  
From: Estate of the late Henry Daniel Shea  
To: John Martin Shea

Note: Attached to this transfer deed was a small document referring to a lease between a certain Wadner & Eriksen, dating to 18 January 1899. However, no more information on the nature of this lease or Wadner & Eriksen could be discovered.

**This TD: T3644, 3.07.1895**

Prev. TD: Bredasdorp Quitrents 1/8 - 15.01.1869  
Next TD: T618, 26.01.1906

Erf: 287 (Bredasdorp)  
Farm Name: Lots 1127 and 1128, known as the farm 'Springfield', including the salt pan.  
Extent: 1/7 th share [2547m 166sr]  
Diagram: none  
Price: Estate of the late Henry Daniel Shea  
From: Estate of the late Henry Daniel Shea  
To: Leonard Mellor Gordon Shea

**This TD: T3645, 3.07.1895**

Prev. TD: Bredasdorp Quitrents 1/8 - 15.01.1869  
Next TD: T618, 26.01.1906  
Erf: 287 (Bredasdorp)  
Farm Name: Lots 1127 and 1128, known as the farm 'Springfield', including the salt pan.  
Extent: 1/7 th share [2547m 166sr]  
Diagram: none  
Price: Estate of the late Henry Daniel Shea  
From: Estate of the late Henry Daniel Shea  
To: Cecil Cowley Shea

**This TD: T618, 26.01.1906**

Prev. TD: T3645, 3.07.1895  
Next TD: T619, 26.01.1906  
Erf: 287 (Bredasdorp)  
Farm Name: Lots 1127 and 1128, known as the farm 'Springfield', including the salt pan.  
Extent: 3/7 th share [2547m 166sr]  
Diagram: none  
Price: 1350 pounds sterling  
From: a. L.M.G. Shea from Cape Town on 31 July 1903  
b. C.C. Shea from Plumstead on 31 July 1903  
c. J.M. Shea from Cape Town on 12 August 1903  
To: Elizabeth Sarah Todd (widow)

**This TD: T619, 26.01.1906**

Prev. TD: T618, 26.01.1906  
Next TD: T2930, 17.04.1914  
Erf: 287 (Bredasdorp)  
Farm Name: Lots 1127 and 1128, known as the farm 'Springfield', including the Saltpan.  
Extent: 2547m 166sr  
Diagram: none  
Price: 2200 pounds sterling  
From: Elizabeth Sarah Todd (widow)  
To: Elizabeth Blackburn (born Anderson) married out of community of property to Alfred Lagden Blackburn

**This TD: T2930, 17.04.1914**  
 Prev. TD: T619, 26.01.1906  
 Next TD: T9406, 2.07.1920 [2095m 52sr]  
 T5399, 21.04.1950 [452m 114sr]  
 Erf: 287 (Bredasdorp)  
 Farm Name: Lots 1127 and 1128, known as the farm 'Springfield', including the Saltpan.  
 Extent: 2547m 166sr  
 Diagram: none  
 Price: 3000 pounds sterling  
 From: Elizabeth Blackburn  
 To: The Springfield Salt Pan and Farming Company Limited

**This TD: T9406, 2.07.1920 [2095m 52sr]**  
 Prev. TD: T2930, 17.04.1914  
 Next TD: T7265, 25.08.1922  
 Erf: 287 (Bredasdorp)  
 Farm Name: The place 'Springfield'  
 Extent: 2095m 52sr  
 Diagram: 1920-155-9406  
 Price: 5578 pounds sterling, 3 shillings, 2 pence  
 From: Abraham Simon Traub and Woolf Beinart in their capacity as the directors of and as such acting on behalf of The Springfield Salt Pan and Farming Company Limited  
 To: Herman Hurwitz, Louis Siegal, Nathan Newman and Aaron Abram Chait, trading in company partnership under the style or firm of 'H. Hurwitz and Co.'  
 Neighbours: NE - Wiesdrift  
 SE, E, N & NE - Remainder  
 E - Zout Bosch  
 S - Rhenoster Kop and Lot A Rhenoster Kop  
 SW - Zoet Anys Berg  
 W - Lot B of Ruigte Fontein  
 Lot C of Ruigtefontein  
 WW - De Fontein and Lot A

**This TD: T5399, 21.04.1950**  
 Prev. TD: T2930, 17.04.1914  
 Next TD: T25272, 22.09.1971  
 Erf: 287 (Bredasdorp)  
 Farm Name: Remaining extent of Lots 1127 and 1128, known as the farm 'Springfield' including the Saltpan.  
 Extent: 452m 114sr  
 Diagram: none  
 Price: 3000 pounds sterling  
 From: Maurice Traub, Director of The Springfield Salt Pan and Farming Company Limited  
 To: James St. Vincent Broke, Lord De Saumarez, born 29 November 1889

**This TD: T25272, 22.09.1971**  
 Prev. TD: T5399, 21.04.1950  
 Next TD: T1500, 23.01.1974 [183,8008Ha]  
 T26967, 26.10.1978 [203,5144Ha]  
 Erf: 287 (Bredasdorp)  
 Farm Name: Remaining extent of Lots 1127 and 1128, known as the farm 'Springfield' including the Saltpan.  
 Extent: 387,3152Ha shared equally between the three owners  
 Diagram: none  
 Price: R23 176.00  
 From: Veronica Llewellyn Palmer, born De Saumarez; Christine Llewellyn, born De Saumarez; Anthony Llewellyn Palmer; as executors testamentary in the estate of the late James St. Vincent Broke, Lord De Saumarez, born 29 November 1889  
 To: Equal shares to:  
 Veronica Llewellyn Palmer  
 Christine Llewellyn  
 Anthony Llewellyn Palmer

**This TD: T1500, 23.01.1974**  
 Prev. TD: T25272, 22.09.1971  
 Next TD: none given  
 Erf: Portion 2 of farm 287 (Bredasdorp)  
 Farm Name: Piece of abolished quitrent land, situate in the division of Bredasdorp, being portion 2 of the farm no. 287  
 Extent: 183,8008Ha  
 Diagram: 478/1867  
 Price: R 9900.00  
 From: Veronica Llewellyn Palmer  
 Christine Llewellyn  
 Anthony Llewellyn Palmer  
 To: Hendrik Vermeulen (born 15 July 1928)

**This TD: T26967, 26.10.1978**  
 Prev. TD: T25272, 22.09.1971  
 Next TD: none given  
 Erf: Rem. of 287 (Bredasdorp)  
 Farm Name: Rem. of farm 287  
 Extent: 203,5144Ha  
 Diagram: none  
 Price: R 8630.00  
 From: Veronica Llewellyn Palmer  
 Christine Llewellyn  
 Anthony Llewellyn Palmer  
 To: Springfield Estate (Pty.) Ltd.

**This TD: T39729, 1987**  
 Next TD: T52108, 1991  
 Prev. TD: T1500, 23.01.1974  
 Erf.: Ptn 2 of farm 287  
 Extent: 183,8008Ha  
 Diagram: None  
 Price:  
 From: Hendrik Vermeulen  
 To: John Elton Morren and Marjorie Grace May Morren

**This TD:**       **T52108, 1991**  
Next TD:       none  
Prev. TD:       T39729, 1987  
Erf.:           Ptn 2 of farm 287  
Extent:        183,8008Ha  
Diagram:       None  
Price:          R 112 000  
From:          John Elton Morren and Marjorie Grace May Morren  
To:             Soutpan Beleggings CC

## **Appendix B**

### **SPRINGFIELD SALT PAN AND FARMING COMPANY LIMITED**

**Memorandum of association**

**Articles of association**

**List of directors**

**Memorandum of Association  
of**

**The Springfield Salt Pan and Farming Company, Limited**

1. The name of the Company is the Springfield Salt Pan and Farming Company, Ltd.
2. The registered office of the company will be situate at no. 8 Bree Street, Cape Town.
3. The objects for which the company is established are:
  - a. To purchase from Elizabeth Blackburn the farm Springfield situate in the division of Bredasdorp.
  - b. To carry on upon the said farm all or any kinds or descriptions of farming business and operations.
  - c. To carry on upon the said farm the business of winning salt from the salt pans thereon situate and mining for salt.
  - d. To carry on upon the said farm the business of prospecting for and mining all and any kinds and descriptions of minerals, metals and precious stones.
  - e. To carry on upon the said farm and elsewhere the business of general dealers and dealers in all kinds of farming produce.
  - f. To erect upon the said farm and elsewhere all and all manner of buildings which shall be required for the purpose of the company's operations.
5. The capital of the company is 2000 pounds sterling. divided into 2000 shares at 1 pound sterling each, and may by resolution of the company be increased or decreased.

In witness whereof we have hereunto set our hands at Darling on this 21st day of October 1913.

<b><i>Name, Address and Description of Shareholder</i></b>	<b><i>No. of shares taken</i></b>
<b>Woolf Beinart</b> Partner Merchant Malmesbury	7 hundred
<b>Gisel Beinart</b> House wife Malmesbury	1 hundred
<b>Philip Beinart</b> Tailor Darling	1 hundred
<b>Alick Beinart</b> Clerk Darling	1 hundred
<b>Nathan Traub</b> (?) Agent Cape Town	4 hundred
<b>Rebecca Traub</b> House wife Cape Town	1 hundred
<b>Abraham Simon Traub</b> Produce Merchant Cape Town	5 hundred

**TOTAL**

**Two Thousand**

**Articles of Association  
of**

**The Springfield Salt Pan and Farming Company, Limited**

... Abraham Simon Traub and Woolf Beinart shall be the first directors and shall continue to hold office as such until they shall die or become disqualified. Abraham Simon Traub shall be chairman of the Board of Directors so long as he shall continue to be a director. ...

[Signed at Darling on 21 October 1913]

*CA LC (Limited Companies) 306 (1346)*

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**Copy of Register of Directors or Managers of The Springfield Salt Pan and Farming Company, Limited.**

<b><i>Names</i></b>	<b><i>Address</i></b>	<b><i>Occupations</i></b>
Abraham Simon Traub	89 Strand Street Cape Town	Director
Wolf Beinart	Malmesburg Cape Province	Director
Frank Carlilon McConnell	107 St. Georges Street Cape Town	Secretary

*SASA LC (Limited Companies) 306 (1346)*  
*[Companies Act 1926 - Form J]*